

Tho' I am not so vain as to imagine any thing from me  
can be acceptable to you, Ladies yet I could not refuse myself ye  
pleasure of doing what pleas'd me so much in thinking of, paying  
my compliments, I mean to you & returning my most Sincere Thanks  
for the agreeable entertainment I found in your company & the  
satisfaction I enjoyed in your conversation. — Methinks I see some  
of you already softening your sweet features into a smile and ready  
to laugh at what you'll call my overstrained compliment: on my word,  
who does so, will use me ill: For I most sincerely assure you, without any  
sort of flattery, I never met with a more agreeable set of ladies ~~in my life~~ or a set  
with whom I should rather choose to enjoy the social comforts of life, than the  
fair eight I am now writing to: and all I have yet either wrote to, or convers'd  
with can witness for me, how highly I have spoken, and yet no more than  
the genuine dictates of my heart, — of the Coventry ladies their good sense,  
wit, charms & good nature: Frequently believe me have I drawn the  
character of each of you, which were it not impertinent I could do now; I could  
speak of the sensibly smiling affability of one, the peculiar sweetness & elegance  
of temper of another, the sprightly vivacity of this, the refined sensibility of that  
and so on. — To each allotting the several excellencies I observed reigning  
amongst you, many of which I must indeed confess were common to you  
all as lustre and roundness are to all the stars, tho' one exceeds another in  
size & glory. How glad should I be of any future opportunity to visit at Coventry  
& again enjoy that sweet society which at this distance I so frequently do in idea, a  
very satisfactory sort of enjoyment by the bye to me. — But not to tire you too long with  
what I fear you'll all be ready enough to think impertinently tedious, I shall just give  
you a short account of what I've been about since I had the misfortune to leave Coventry & then  
poison-like with a few practical observations conclude. I spent the next week after I left you  
at Cotesby very agreeably: chiefly employ'd in viewing gardens, seats, fine prospects & so on,  
amongst which was the famous seat of Ld. Coltham. Howe but as a friend of mine once observed  
Tho' fields & groves are my peculiar care  
No sweets has Eden if no love be there —



Every Step I chag'd along that spacious paradise serv'd only to remind me of what I left at Coventry & rais'd the painful reflection of lost pleasures with which the present were no way comparable. -

A. Wilderness were populous enough  
So Suffolk had thy heavenly company  
For when thou art, there is the world itself  
With every several pleasure in the world  
And when thou art not, Desolation

After this week spent & after having made several visits by the way I arrived at the place of my nativity which after only 5 days of pure satisfaction & pleasure I left for the place I now am at, Boston, now fam'd for its lofty towers than beautiful ladies: Here I now am spending a very busily-idle life. eating, drinking, dressing, (according to old Nurse Washington for several hours) laughing, talking, (more commonly saying nothing) fooling, singing, sporting dancing, yawning, & sleeping a faithful history believe me of my whole life. The ladies here are continually abusing me: They tell me I have lost all my wonted spirits: Many hours I sit in company with my eyes fixed & never once permit my mouth to open & when I do thence never proceeds word of comfort, never word that seems to send me with smiling faced satisfaction but when the theme is Coventry & its ladies. Think ye me in love now perchance it may be so, but I fear none of you would at all regard my passion & either laugh at my sincerity found so seldom in modern times - or scorn my presumption. Be it so, but oh fair ladies - and some of you have felt! But why go on I'll certainly come to Coventry again & once more behold your luscious darling eyes. - The morning you receive this, I shall return from this place so that perhaps while you are reading it I shall be driving my sister & another lady towards the city of Bourne. How shall the horses I meet, how shall they run; for their master miserable, why should they proudly charmp the bit & enjoy each others converse as pleasantly trotting along? Till the latter end of October I shall journey only about home & then betake myself to Suffolk for about a fortnight and thence to Town, where I think I am to have the happiness of seeing <sup>some of</sup> you, (Oh that it was all) & be sure I'll enquire you out or seeing you glittering ~~in~~ in the boxes, met you with ogles, till at length you recognize his face who once laugh'd with you at Coventry. - I ordered my bookeller in Town to send down two Poems to your friendly Society of twice four which tho' unworthy your perusal will serve to remind you of me who in this absence often thinks of you, & to let you see he has some little feeling & sensibility: I hope



neither they nor this letter will prove so troublesome guests as to be returned to their unhappy master & add torture to that wound your tenderness I should imagine would be ready to pour balm into: Whether I shall be favoured with the balm I wish namely a letter from you I know not, that must be left to the kinder fates but should there be any piece of any kind ever published you should like to see 't would give me great pleasure to supply you with it.

The gentleman I mentioned to you I find thought it not meet to visit your City: & I hear too Mr Hopkins has not yet given his ball: "So, so, cries Miss Anna Gilbert, he has some news from Coventry then." Yes indeed, fair one I have, & more perhaps, may some that might be news to you.

I see that sweet smile on the good natured face of charming Miss Lucy Bird; say Miss Jenny don't be angry with me neither pretty Patie use me well. — For God's sake ladies, you really put me out of countenance yea even at this distance. — I must hide my face, 'tis so painful to blush!

Well for what has all this been — Verily I know not what we laugh'd at. So it often happens. — As for you Miss Yardly I'll inform Mr \*\* whose name I would write in the Gypsy language, only I fear you are so great adepts in it. 'Twill be easily found out & I am sure are the secrets of love: Oh love! little blind tormenting Tyrant; what <sup>an</sup> arrow has transfixed my heart! How I pine away in perpetual torture! & send small & small hopes of relief! Why was I born if to be thy slave, or why thy slave if now to be made free? There's the plaining of an enamour'd Stephen these are dying speeches: but oft beneath the guise of sportive jest sly truth ambiguous lurks — as an old friend <sup>exclaims</sup> of our ladies observes, whom I would recommend to your perusal as far more worthy of it than the idle scribble of your most sincere admirer. In truth I enjoy myself so much in writing this scrawl to you that I know not where to leave off. — Methinks I am now sitting amongst you the 4 Miss Gilberts, Miss Yardly & the 3 Miss Birds in an agreeable tête à tête conversation and enjoying a pleasure nowhere to be found but amongst you. Oh that Sunday that last Sunday painful reflection! I sat amongst Sophy's, I heard Clarissa talking. — Then, then I had a foretaste of Heaven & the delicate sensations pure spirits must feel when discoursing on divine and enrapturing subjects. — But

Come expressive Silence must then praise.

Most sincerely, dear ladies do I wish each of you all the happiness you deserve & I doubt not your own good sense will supply you with all the truest pleasures life can afford: The bed of which believe me ~~you~~ are those you are



likely to have the mod of those flowing from virtue & innocence:  
Tho' my acquaintance was but small with you (it's <sup>more than</sup> greatly possible  
we may never meet again) 'twas enough to make me regret the loss of  
those excellencies I observed amongst you. 'twas long enough to let me see  
& admire your virtues & 'twas long enough to make most tenderly &  
sincerely wish all your welfares & if possible a renewal of your  
acquaintance. Farewell & at least remember one whose greatest  
pleasure will be to reflect on what he owes to you; & who is now  
more delighted than when he recollects how much real satisfaction  
he shared amongst you & which if ever in his power, he would with  
the greatest transport return: ever glad at all times & in all places  
to prove himself Dear Miss Gilberts & Miss Gardlys & Miss Birds  
most oblig'd & ever affectionate  
Friend & humble servant  
Boston — William Dodd. —

Sept 7 1750

Pardon me for growing so serious & dull what could I do less  
and yet I am preparing for a splendid dinner (enough to make me merry  
you'll say) headed by our noble mayor & his hungry dainty loving Alderman.  
Oh what a scene will there be! after that we are to enjoy a brilliant  
ball. Very bad with a full stomach, & I the hand of a fair Lady for my  
partner whose praises I would sound if all that I should say would not  
set her so much below my Coventry partners that I deem it much  
better to be silent. Tho' upon my credit she is a very agreeable lady  
just turned seventeen, so sweet, so good natured, so sensible so —  
But no more so's left. —

Farewell remember me! W. D.

Beautifully sweet & charming

Innocently mild & young

Plagues the maid my former charming

Dearest of your lovely throng!

— Her's more meant  
than you imagine  
read 'em again?